



Maryland Department of the  
Environment

## **FACTS ABOUT: ROCKVILLE LAUNCH (MD-226)**

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### **Site Description**

The address for the 13.7-acre Rockville Launch (MD-226) was 770 Muddy Branch Road, Gaithersburg, Montgomery County, MD 20878. The geographic coordinates for the site are 039 degrees 7 minutes 00.72 seconds north latitude by 077 degrees 13 minutes 11.43 seconds east longitude. The Maryland grid coordinates are 467,000 north by 738,000 east.

The Rockville Nike Launch Facility operated from 1955 through 1974 at the location off Muddy Branch Road near Gaithersburg. This report references the site as Rockville W-92. Following base closure in 1974, the site was turned over to the Consumer Product Safety Commission and later, to the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Currently, the Nike launch site is owned by the U.S. Federal Government.

### **Site History**

The Nike missile launch site is a testament to the Cold War era. "Rockville W-92" was a guided missile base installed to help defend the Nation's Capital from enemy bombers. Built in 1954, the missile launch site located west of Muddy Branch Road, housed both NIKE Ajax and Hercules missiles. The launch site contains three missile silos and a collection of barracks and out-buildings. The Nike site remained operational until 1974, when rendered obsolete by the refinement of intercontinental ballistic missiles.

In the early years of the Cold War, the United States Army set up a battery of Nike missile defense systems around forty major US cities. The typical Nike base consisted of two operational areas: the launch area and the fire control area. The launch area contained the facilities and equipment required to assemble, test and maintain the missiles and associated launch mechanisms.

### **Waste Description**

The Nike Ajax missile was a liquid fueled rocket using red fuming nitric acid mixed with unsymmetrical dimethyl hydrazine (UDMH) and JP-4 jet petroleum. The Nike Hercules missile used ammonium perchlorate as an oxidizer and synthetic rubber mixed with aluminum as the fuel.

Contaminants used at the Nike site include trichloroethene (TCE), tetrachloroethene (PCE), benzene, carbon tetrachloride and associated degreasing agents, petroleum



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compounds, red fuming nitric acid, dimethyl hydrazine, perchlorates, lead based paints, asbestos containing materials, polychlorinated biphenyls, pesticides and heavy metals.

There was one dry well associated with the rocket cleaning and assembly building and a second dry well associated with the rocket fueling facility.

## **Environmental Investigations**

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has investigated the site under the formerly used defense site (FUDS) initiative. Portions of the site were remediated under USACE oversight. Monitoring well sampling at the Rockville Launch site revealed levels of chlorinated solvents in on site monitoring wells significantly above background and or above regional screening levels. Samples of site soils found elevated levels of metals and poly-aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) in some on site locations.

The results of early groundwater studies identified TCE in monitoring well MW-4 at 21 ug/l. This is an on site well located adjacent to the old missile assembly building. The USACE in 2003 and ARM in 2007 conducted confirmatory sampling of MW-4 and did not identify TCE or any other significant levels of volatile organic compounds in the well. USACE abandoned MW-2, MW-3 and MW-4.

Indoor air sampling found TCE above the USEPA vapor intrusion guideline in samples collected on site. The soil gas investigation identified TCE at levels above the EPA Vapor Intrusion Guidance Criteria of 2.2 ug/m<sup>3</sup>.

ARM conducted a soil gas study in August 2007. The samples collected from the missile assembly building and the propellant building were above EPA vapor intrusion guidelines.

## **Current Status**

USACE has no further plans for remediation of the site. In October 2011 MDE conducted a FUDS Site Inspection (SI) of the Rockville Launch site to identify soil and groundwater contamination and to determine if further vapor intrusion studies were warranted. The SI report found minimal residual contamination of the surface and subsurface soils at the Rockville Launch site. While TCE has been documented on the Rockville Launch site, there are no domestic wells in use in the vicinity of the site. Based on USACE findings, low levels of TCE are present in groundwater on site. ARM documented low levels of TCE in soil vapor under three site structures, the missile assembly building, the propellant handling building and the administration building. However, there is currently no evidence of contaminants at levels that could be considered significant; therefore, MDE does not believe that further action is warranted at this site.



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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
BALTIMORE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P. O. BOX 1715  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21203-1715

June 26, 2003

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

Programs and Project  
Management Division

Mr. William Kahl  
Maryland Department  
of the Environment  
Waste Management Administration  
1800 Washington Boulevard, Suite 625  
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

**RE:** Former Nike Battery W-92, Rockville-Launch Area, Montgomery County, Maryland  
(Formerly Used Defense Site C03MD0245)

Dear Mr. Kahl:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, is in receipt of your letter dated June 16, 2003, providing concurrence with the findings of the *Draft Final Summary of Findings Report, Confirmatory Sampling at MW-4, Former Nike Battery W-92, Rockville-Launch Area, Gaithersburg, Montgomery County, Maryland*, dated April 2003. In addition, MDE concurs with the recommendation for no further action at the W-92 Launch Area, located in Montgomery County, Maryland.

On April 8, 2003, the draft final report was submitted to your agency, as well as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Region III Superfund Office, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) (property owner), and the City of Gaithersburg for review and comment. NIST and the City of Gaithersburg had no comments. The USEPA Superfund Office assigned a No Further Remedial Action Planned (NFRAP) qualifier to the W-92 Rockville Launch Area.

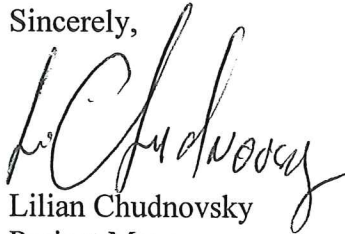
Based on MDE's concurrence of no further action and USEPA's NFRAP, no additional Department of Defense action is required or will be conducted at the W-92 Rockville-Launch Area.

The Baltimore District has prepared the final report for the additional groundwater sampling conducted at the W-92 Rockville-Launch Area. We are enclosing one (1) copy of the report entitled, *Final Summary of Findings, Confirmatory Sampling at MW-4, Former Nike Battery W-92, Rockville-Launch Area, Gaithersburg, Montgomery County, Maryland*, dated June 2003 for your files.

Copies of the final report are also being submitted to the USEPA Region III Superfund Office, NIST, and the City of Gaithersburg, Maryland.

Questions regarding this matter should be directed to the Design Team Leader, Ms. Maria de la Torre, at (410) 779-2795.

Sincerely,



Lilian Chudnovsky  
Project Manager

Enclosures

Copies Furnished:

USEPA, Region III (James J. Hargett, Jr.) – 1 copy

National Institute of Standards and Technology (Ken Lechter) – 1 copy

City of Gaithersburg (Tony Tomasello) – 1 copy

*Revid*



**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

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Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.  
Governor

Kendl P. Philbrick  
Acting Secretary

Michael S. Steele  
Lt. Governor

June 16, 2003

Maria De La Torre  
Design Team Leader, W-92  
Attn: CENAB-EN-H  
P.O. Box 1715  
Baltimore, Maryland 21203-1715

Re: Draft Final Summary of Findings, Former Nike Battery, W-92, Rockville-Launch Area,  
April 2003

Dear Ms. De La Torre:

The Federal Facilities Section of the Maryland Department of the Environment's Waste Management Administration has reviewed the above-referenced document, which is a follow-up investigation to the USEPA START report dated June 2001. The results and interpretation of the sampling data from groundwater well MW-4 are acceptable.

Additionally, MDE concurs with the recommendation for no further action on groundwater. This concurrence is based on the results of several sampling events, including the site Confirmation Study (equivalent to a Site Investigation) dated July 1988, duplicate samples collected by Waste Management Administration personnel during the Confirmation Study, and several independent sampling events conducted by Waste Management Administration personnel prior to 1988.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (410) 537-3392.

Sincerely,

William R. Kahl  
Remedial Project Manager  
Federal/NPL Superfund Division

cc: Mr. Jonas A. Jacobson  
Mr. Karl Kalbacher

**Consolidated Agency Comments**  
**on**  
**Draft Final Confirmatory Sampling Report, dated April 2003**  
**FUDS W-92 Rockville**  
**Montgomery County, MD**

City of Gaithersburg (Erica Shingara, Environmental Specialist)

Thank you for providing the City of Gaithersburg with the opportunity to review the draft final report. We do not have comments on the report and we look forward to hearing responses from MDE and EPA.

National Institute of Standards & Technology (Ken Lechter, Associate Director of Administration for External Affairs)

On behalf of NIST, we have no comments on the draft final report.

EPA, Region III (James Hargett, Jr.)

Thank you for the phone clarification (May 2, 2003) and results of single monitoring well #4's data.

The major goal of the EPA-Superfund program is to protect human health and the environment by cleaning up abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites.

EPA-Superfund acknowledges that the National Institute of Standards & Technology's and U.S. Corp of Engineers' work to develop information relating to the nature and extent of environmental concern regarding the projected Rockville Launch (Nike Battery W-92)'s location.

My December 2001 Rockville Launch (Nike Battery W-92)'s sampling options mistakenly assumed 8 micrograms per liter (part per billion) of TCE.

Since the 2001 EPA-Superfund's analytical results (0.8 ppb) of Rockville Launch are below the Federal-State drinking water threshold (5 micrograms per liter- 5 ppb), the 2003 U.S. Corps of Engineers' analytical results (below 0.8 ppb) of Rockville Launch are below the Federal-State drinking water threshold (5 micrograms per liter), Superfund-EPA confirms its **No Further Remedial Action Planned (NFRAP) qualifier to Rockville Launch (Nike Battery W-92) and disregards its earlier suggested environmental options.**

Superfund found no immediate threats to human health and/or the environment at Rockville Launch (Nike Battery W-92). Superfund agrees that the projected Rockville Launch (Nike Battery W-92)'s location can be developed with the open disclosure of the pre-assessment conditions & the appropriate institutional controls.

Maryland Department of the Environment (William "Rusty" Kahl)

See attached letter dated June 16, 2003.



Agency Hazardous Waste Compliance Docket Coordinator, Federal Facilities Enforcement Office (Mail Code 2261), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460.

#### 4. Facilities Not Included

As explained in the preamble to the original docket (53 F.R. 4280), the docket does not include the following categories of facilities (note, however, that any of these types of facilities may, when appropriate, be listed on the NPL):

- Facilities formerly owned by a Federal agency and now privately owned will not be listed on the docket. However, facilities that are now owned by another Federal agency will remain on the docket and the responsibility for conducting PAs and SIs will rest with the current owner.

- SQG that have never produced more than 1,000 kg of hazardous waste in any single month and that have not reported releases under CERCLA section 103 or other hazardous waste activities under RCRA section 3016 will not be listed on the docket.

- Facilities that are solely transporters, as reported under RCRA section 3010, will not be listed on the docket.

#### 5. Information Contained on Docket Listing

As discussed above, the update information below is divided into four separate sections. The first section is a list of new facilities that are being added to the docket. The second section is a list of facilities that are being deleted from the docket. The third section comprises corrections of information included on the docket. The fourth section is a list of facilities classified as NFRAP. Each facility listed for the update has been assigned a code that indicates a more specific reason(s) for the addition, deletion, or correction. The code key precedes the lists.

It is EPA's policy that all facilities on the additions list to this ninth docket update must submit a PA and, if warranted, an SI to EPA within 18 months of the date of this publication. The PA must include existing information about a site and its surrounding environment, including a thorough examination of human, food-chain, and environmental targets, potential waste sources, and migration pathways. From information in the PA or other information coming to EPA's attention, EPA will determine whether a followup SI is required. An SI augments the data collected in a PA. An SI may reflect sampling and other field data that are used to determine whether

further action or investigation is appropriate. This policy includes any facility for which there is a change in the identity of the responsible Federal agency. The reports should be submitted to the Federal facilities coordinator in the appropriate EPA Regional office.

The facilities listed in each section are organized by state and then grouped alphabetically within each state by the Federal agency responsible for the facility. Under each state heading is listed the name and address of the facility, the Federal agency responsible for the facility, the statutory provision(s) under which the facility was reported to EPA, and the correction code(s).

The statutory provisions under which a facility reported are listed in a column titled "Reporting Mechanisms." Applicable mechanisms are listed for each facility: for example 3010, 3016, and 103c.

The complete list of Federal facilities that now make up the docket is not being published today. However, the list is available to interested parties and can be obtained by calling the toll-free telephone line for the docket at (800) 548-1016, or locally (703) 883-8577. As of today, the total number of Federal facilities that appear on the docket is 2,070.

#### 6. Facility Status Reporting

In response to numerous requests from Federal agencies, EPA has expanded the docket database to include information on the NFRAP status of facilities listed. A prevalent concern has been the inability to identify facilities that, after submitting all necessary site assessment information, were found to warrant no further involvement on the part of EPA at the time. Accordingly, EPA has expanded the docket database to include a column indicating the facility's status.

The status codes are:

U=Undetermined

N=No further remedial action planned (NFRAP)

P=Currently proposed for the NPL

F=Currently final on the NPL

R=Removed from the proposed NPL and no longer considered for the final NPL

D=Deleted from the final NPL

EPA changed the site assessment recommendation site evaluation accomplished (SEA) to NFRAP. NFRAP is a term used in the Superfund site assessment program to identify facilities for which EPA has found that currently available information indicates that listing on the NPL is not likely and further assessment is not appropriate at

the time. NFRAP status does not represent an EPA determination that no environmental threats are present at the facility or that no further environmental response action of any kind is necessary. NFRAP status means only that the facility does not appear, from the information available to EPA at this time, to warrant listing on the NPL, and that, therefore, EPA anticipates no further involvement by EPA in site assessment or cleanup at the facility.

However, additional CERCLA response actions by the Federal agency that owns or operates the facility, whether remedial or removal actions, may be necessary at a facility that has NFRAP status. The status information contained in the docket database is the result of Regional evaluation of information taken directly from CERCLIS. (CERCLIS is a database that helps EPA Headquarters and Regional personnel manage sites, programs, and projects. It contains the official inventory of all CERCLA (NPL and non-NPL) sites and supports all site planning and tracking functions. It also integrates financial data from preremedial, remedial, removal, and enforcement programs.) The status information was taken from CERCLIS and sent to the Regional docket coordinators for review. The results of those reviews were incorporated into the status field in the docket database. Subsequently, a list of all facilities having NFRAP status (those for which an "N" appears in the status field) was generated; the list is being published today.

Important limitations apply to the list of facilities that have NFRAP status. First, the information is accurate only as of July 16, 1993. Second, a facility's status may change at any time because of any number of factors, including new site information or changing EPA policies. Finally, the list of facilities that have NFRAP status is based on Regional review of CERCLIS data, is provided for information purposes only, and should not be considered binding upon either the Federal agency responsible for the facility or EPA.

The status information in the docket database will be reviewed, and a new list of facilities classified as NFRAP will be published at each docket update.

Dated: March 14, 1995.

Barry N. Breen,

Director, Federal Facilities Enforcement Office.

#### Docket Revisions

Categories of Revisions for Docket Update by Correction Code.



## FEDERAL FACILITIES DOCKET, NFRAP STATUS FACILITIES—Continued

Facility name	Facility address	City	State	ZIP code	Agency	Reporting mechanism
Woods Hole Coast Guard Base.	Little Harbor Road	Falmouth	MA	02543	Transportation	3010 103c
Adelphi Laboratory Center	2800 Powder Mill Rd.	Adelphi	MD	20783	Army	3005 3010 3016 103c
National Institute of Standards and Technology.	Quince Orchard Rd	Gaithersburg	MD	20760	Commerce	3005 3010 103c
National Marine Fisheries Service.	South Morris Street Ext.	Oxford	MD	21654	Commerce	103c 3010
Defense National Stockpile Center.	710 Ordnance Road	Baltimore	MD	21226	Defense Logistics Agency.	3005 3010 3016 103c
NIH-Bethesda	9000 Rockville Pike	Bethesda	MD	20892	Health and Human Services.	3005 3010 3016 103c 103a
Goddard Space Flight Center	Greenbelt Road	Greenbelt	MD	20771	NASA	3010 103c
Annapolis Naval Academy	Annapolis Naval Complex	Annapolis	MD	21402	Navy	3005 3010 3016 103c
National Naval Medical Center.	8901 Wisconsin Ave	Bethesda	MD	20814	Navy	3005 3010 3016 103c 103a
Casco Bay Defense Fuel Support Point.	Rt. 123	South Harpswell Neck.	ME	04079	Defense Logistics Agency.	3010 3016 103c
Searsport Defense Fuel Support Point.	Trundy Road Box 112	Searsport	ME	04974	Defense Logistics Agency.	3010 3016 103c
FWS-Seal Island National Wildlife Refuge.	P.O. Box 1077	Calais	ME	04619	Interior	103c
Gouldsboro Naval Security Group Activity.	Bldg 41 (Operations Site)	Gouldsboro	ME	04624	Navy	103c
Winterharbor Naval Security Group Activity.	Route 186	Winterharbor	ME	04693	Navy	3010 103c
Huron-Maristee NF: Ranger Station.	12 N. Charles	White Cloud	MI	49348	Agriculture	103c 3010 3016
Tank Automotive Command	6501 E. 11 Mile Rd Macomb County.	Warren	MI	48090	Army	3005 3010 3016 103c 103a
Harrisville Defense Fuel Support Point.	US Hwy 23	Harrisville	MI	48740	Defense	103c
Ann Arbor Motor Vehicle Emission Laboratory.	2565 Plymouth Road	Ann Arbor	MI	48105	EPA	3010
Minneapolis St. Paul Bulk Mail Center.	3165 S. Lexington Ave	St. Paul	MN	55121	Postal Service	3010
Schuster Farm	Sec 58 S17 T55N R33W	Gower	MO		Agriculture	103c
MO Aviation Classification & Repair Activity Depot.	2501 Lester Jones Ave	Springfield	MO	65803	Army	103c 3010
Defense Mapping Agency-Fee	3200 S. Second Street	St. Louis	MO	63118	Defense Mapping Agency.	3010
Defense Mapping Agency-Fee	8900 S. Broadway	St. Louis	MO	63118	Defense Mapping Agency.	3010
Mobile Incinerator	SE 1/4 NW 1/4 Sec 20	McDowell	MO	65769	EPA	3010 103c
St. Louis	1222 Spruce	St. Louis	MO	63103	General Services Administration.	3005 3010 103a
BM-Rolla Research Center	1300 Bishop Ave	Rolla	MO	65401	Interior	103c
Columbus Air Force Base	14 ABG/DE	Columbus AFB	MS	39701	Air Force	3005 3010 3016 103c
Keesler Air Force Base	3380 CES/DE	Keesler AFB	MS	39534	Air Force	3005 3010 3016 103c
Engineering Environmental Waterway Laboratory.	PO Box 631	Vicksburg	MS	39180	Army	3005 3010 3016 103c
Gulfport Naval Construction Battalion Center.	33rd Ave	Gulfport	MS	39501	Navy	3010 103c 103a
Fort Keogh Livestock and Range Research Laboratory.	Route 1, Box 2021	Miles City	MT	59301	Agriculture	3016 103c
Malmstrom Air Force Base	Facility 1501 Perimeter Rd	Great Falls	MT	59402	Air Force	3005 3010 3016 103c 103a
BPA-Hot Springs Substation TLM Complex.	Hwy 28, S. of Hot Springs, Sec 14 T21N RW.	Hot Springs	MT	59845	Energy	103c
Component Development and Integration Facility.	Industrial Park	Butte	MT	59702	Energy	3016
BLM-Illegal Airstrip John Graytak.	Section 6 T11N R27E	Flatwillow	MT		Interior	103c
BLM-Jet Fuel Refinery Site	T14NR31E 4 MI E of Mosby	Mosby	MT		Interior	103c